(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to check the pest attack on Bt. cotton?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. Pink boll worm has been progressively increasing in the entire South and Central India including Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat during last two to three years.

(b) No, Sir. Bt. cotton is effective in controlling lepidopteran pests including pink bollworm as per the observation made by the Monitoring-cum-Evaluation Committee of DBT, Ministry of Science and Technology.

(c) Question does not arise.

Reforming APMC markets

1122. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any strategy to reform Agriculture Produce Market Committee markets throughout the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government also propose to bring forward amendments in existing marketing laws and structure;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the other measures proposed to provide legal and administrative support for trade in various agricultural commodities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b)The Inter-MinisterialTask Force on Agricultural Marketing Reforms constituted by this Ministry in its report of 28.6.2002 has *inter-alia* recommended that all the State Governments should amend the State Agricultural Produce Marketing Regulations Act (APMC Act) to provide for the following:

(i) Enabling private and cooperative sectors to establish and

operate (including levy of service charge) agricultural marketing infrastructure and supporting services.

(ii) Direct marketing of agricultural commodities from producing areas and farmer's fields, without the necessity of going through licensed traders and regulated markets.

(iii) Permitting "contract farming" programmes by processing or marketing firms. The APMC within whose jurisdiction the area covered by contract farming agreement lies, should record the contract farming agreements and act as a protector of producer's and processor's interests with due legal support in its jurisdiction.

(iv) Rationalization of levy of market fee by introducing single point levy of market fee in the entire process of marketing in the State. Levy of market fee should be more in the nature of service charge based on the quality of services provided.

(c)The recommendations of the Task Force were discussed with the State Governments in the National Conference on Agricultural Marketing Reforms held on 27.9.2002 and later by the Standing Committee of State Ministers on 29.1.2003, wherein this Ministry was requested to formulate a Model Legislation on Agricultural Marketing in order to guide the States in implementing the reforms. Accordingly, a Committee under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary in the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation has formulated a Model Legislation on Agricultural Marketing.

(d) and (e)The salient features of the Model Act for State Agricultural Produce Marketing (Development and Regulation) Act, 2003 are as under—

* Legal persons, growers and local authorities permitted to establish new markets in any area.
* No compulsion of growers to sell their produce through existing regulated markets.
* Establishment of direct purchase centres, consumers/farmers markets for direct sale.
* Promotion of public private partnership in the management and development of agricultural markets in the country.

* Separate constitution for special markets for commodities like onions, fruits, vegetables, flowers etc.

* A separate chapter to regulate and promote contract farming arrangements in the country.

* Prohibition of commission agency in any transaction of agricultural commodities with the producers.

* Market Committee to promote alternative marketing system, contract farming, direct marketing and farmers/consumers markets.

* State Marketing Boards to promote standardization, grading quality certification, market led extension and training of farmers and market functionaries in marketing related areas.

* Constitution of State Marketing Standards Bureau for promotion of grading, standardization and quality certification of agriculture produce.

The Model Act has been circulated to all State Governments/UT Administrations for further follow up action as the subject matter falls within their purview.

Seed business

1123. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the seed business in the country is increasingly going into the hands of MNCs;

(b) if so, the percentage of seed business under the control of MNCs and Indian seed companies;

(c) the share of the Monsanto and Pro Agro in the business; and

(d) the efforts of the ICAR to develop pure varieties that would have the advantage of hybrids but seed of which could be produced and used by farmers .themselves?